

Maternal Dietary Patterns during Third Trimester in Association with Birthweight Characteristics and Early Infant Growth

In an article published in the December 2013 issue of *Scientifica*, Poon et al. examined the relationship between expectant mothers' dietary habits and lifestyles on fetal growth measured by the infant's birthweight, size for gestational age, and early infant growth. Their infants were assessed on birthweight and growth through one year of age. The findings of this prospective cohort study indicate that while maternal dietary habits did not affect the specific birth outcomes of interest (birthweight, size for gestational age, infant growth), smoking and higher pre-pregnancy BMI increased the risk of delivering an infant small-for-gestational age (smoking) or large-for-gestational-age (BMI).

- [Read the full article](#)

Diet Soda Doesn't Mean Weight Loss

[Johns Hopkins researchers](#) report that heavier adults who drank diet sodas ate more food calories than overweight adults who drank sugar-sweetened beverages.

US Adults Eating Better

American adults are eating better, making better use of available nutrition information, and consuming fewer calories coming from fat and saturated fat, consuming less cholesterol and eating more fiber, according to a new report from the [USDA's Economic Research Service](#).

Fast Food Not Major Cause of Childhood Obesity



Researchers at the [University of North Carolina](#) point out that "children's consumption of fast food is only a small part of a much more pervasive dietary pattern that is fostered at an early age by children's parents and caregivers. The pattern includes few fruits and vegetables, relying instead on high amounts of processed food and sugar-sweetened beverages."

Breastfeeding Lowers Rheumatoid Arthritis Risk

Data from a [study in China](#) of 7000 women indicates a reduced risk (by about half) of rheumatoid arthritis as a result of breastfeeding. Even more promising is a relation between lower risk with longer duration of breastfeeding.